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Professor Ritter, which has just held its fourth anniversary,—of M. Vander-Maelen, whose establishment at Brussels is in itself a society,—and especially of the Geographical Society of Paris, now in the fifteenth year of its existence. Besides its monthly bulletins, it has completed five volumes of a *Recueil de Mémoires*, some of them of great interest; and particularly that on the *Orographie de l'Europe*. The two last contain the Relation of Rubruquis, and the Geography of Edrisi, translated by M. A. Jaubert. The work of Abú-l-feda is soon to follow.

Neither can we omit to mention the liberality with which during each of the three past years this Society has awarded a medal for discovery to three of our countrymen—Burnes, Ross, and Back. May the mutual correspondence of the several Societies, and the exchange of information, stimulate each other to press forward in the cause of geography! and we hail the foundation of a Geographical Society at Frankfort-on-the-Main (the news of which has only this day reached us), headed by the names of Kriegk and of Meidinger, as an earnest that many valuable labourers are about to take a share in promoting the object for which we are instituted—the advancement of geographical science and discovery.

XV.—*A brief Account of an Ascent of the Old Calabar River in 1836.* By R. K. OLDFIELD, Esq. Read June 12, 1837.

[The following pages were accompanied by an eye sketch of part of the river, but the data are not sufficiently accurate to enable us to lay them down on any of our maps or charts.]

ACCOUNTS from Fernando Po state that Messrs. Becroft and Oldfield, of that island, have been with the steamer Quorra about 120 miles up the Cross or Calabar river, and beyond the place where the unfortunate Mr. Coulthurst turned back in 1832.* It appears that a people called Itús, residing at a town named Old Ecricok in the Enyon country, have for many years been at war with the natives of Calabar, who are obliged to pass this town on their way to trade with the Qua and Boson countries. The Itú people are well known for their thievish propensities, and wish to levy a tax on all canoes passing their town; and the reason they assign is, that the Calabarians disturb the fish of the river before their town, and that they ought to be made to pay for it. The merchant vessels at Calabar for palm oil have this

* See Journal R. G. S., vol. ii. p. 309.

season suffered considerable detention in consequence of this *pâlaver*, and therefore Duke Ephraim and King Eyamba solicited Messrs. Becroft and Oldfield to take them up the river in the Quorra steam-boat as far as the town of Old Ecricok, and try to bring the natives of that place to some better understanding.

Friday, September 30th, 1836 (says Mr. Oldfield's journal), the steamer proceeded up the river, having on board Duke Ephraim, King Eyamba, Prince Orf Young, and most of the chiefs of Calabar, accompanied by numerous well-manned and armed canoes with colours flying and music playing. In the centre of each canoe was a bamboo house, and in the bow was mounted a large gun (either a four or six-pounder) on a carriage. Most of the canoes were decorated with four or five flags; indeed flags of all nations were displayed to the breeze.

At 1h. 30m. p.m. rounded the point of what is called Cross River, about 60 miles from the sea, and entered a fine reach in a N.W. direction, with from two to seven fathoms water. Many islands were visible, and between them large sheets of water. The steamer grounded twice, but soon got off when the tide made. We then entered a reach nearly two miles long, with a strong current, islands and mangrove trees in every direction. After being a few hours under way, we passed a small village on the east side of the river, consisting of a few huts in a dilapidated condition: having passed the estuary, we had expected to see a narrow river more like a creek; but to our surprise we entered a splendid reach, 800 yards wide, with three fathoms water, and running in a N. by E. direction; this we named Maconochie Reach. Shortly after we passed a pretty island, thickly wooded, to the west, and called it Becroft's Island. The river widened as we proceeded, and the country began to assume a more enlivening appearance, having abundance of cabbage and bamboo trees on the banks. A few huts only were to be seen on the east bank, and part of a village washed away, the land being overflowed to a considerable extent. The next reach we entered ran N.W. by N., with huts on the eastern side, and a beautiful island thickly wooded, its banks also covered with water, which strongly resembled Sunday Island in the Quorra. King Eyamba informed us that near to this place there was a town named Berruk-bah, where the women always brought forth twins. In this reach, which was named Oldfield Reach, is situated the town of Ecricok, almost concealed from view by trees and underwood, in a bay on the west bank, which is here 100 feet high; the width of the river in this part is upwards of a mile. In the evening we went on shore. The ascent to the town is difficult and almost perpendicular; the soil is clay with red sand. There were fifty or sixty head of fine cattle grazing in the market-place. The king is named Tom

Eericok : he is an elderly man of a dark-yellow colour, and has been frequently trading with masters of ships at Calabar. We called upon him, and had to pass through seven court-yards : the houses are built in the Ibu style, with platforms : the room in which we were was low, the walls built of mud, and for a seat we had a platform of mud, about four feet high, with a pedestal made of soft clay smoothed and painted black. In most of the yards the blood of animals was sprinkled on the ground as fetish for war. The old gentleman invited us to dine the following day at twelve o'clock, when the town gun would fire. Our feast consisted of goats' flesh, fish, palm oil, and pepper, a common dish in Africa. Crowds of women and children came out to see us, but ran away as we approached them, quite afraid. We saw a female, an Albino, with white curly hair, red eyes, and white skin. When I requested to see her, she ran away, and was brought to us, struggling, and much afraid. At the back of this town is a very fine and populous country, named Egbo Syra, the natives of which supply those who reside on the banks of the river with bullocks, sheep, and goats, and large quantities of palm oil.

Oct. 3.—At twelve o'clock we weighed and at one anchored for a few minutes off a village named Headem. This last reach, which is a very fine one, is nearly seven miles long. At 12h. 45m. we had entered another fine reach running N. and S., which was named Laird's Reach, with high banks on the west side of the river, which still continues to wind. It is now 1200 yards wide, the country very fine, and the scenery picturesque. We passed the site of two towns which King Eyamba had set fire to last year. The river begins to narrow considerably a few hundred yards above two islands which we called Mary and Mitchell, and again suddenly widens into an admirably fine reach which we named Blunt's Reach, running W.S.W. In the evening about five we anchored off the town of Old Eericok, at about 100 yards from the shore. The country here appears to become hilly.

The town of Old Eericok is situated on the slope of a hill on the south-west bank of the river, and about 250 feet above its level : round the houses is a cleared space ; beyond this, on each side, and above the town on the hill, is a complete forest of high trees. We remained here five days, and returned to Calabar on the 8th February. The latitude of Old Eericok is $6^{\circ} 40' N.$, long. $8^{\circ} 10' E.$ of Greenwich.

With respect to this river, we were much surprised to find it so large, and deep ; the estuary of the Calabar is larger than that of the Quorra, but it is not quite so wide and deep at the same distance from the sea. The current runs at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 knots per hour.

From the information of several respectable traders, we learn

that the river continues its course from the N.W., and that it has deep water a great many days' journey up. At the spot whence we returned down the river, the reach, which we named Beaufort's Reach, comes from the N.E., and appeared to widen considerably as far as we could see. The following facts may be noticed: several men from the Boson country came on board, and I was struck with the fetish worn round the head and arms being made of leather, and precisely the same as worn by the natives on the banks of the Quorra. One person had a fetish encircling his head exactly in the same manner as Abboka, the good king of Adamúgo (on the banks of the Quorra) usually wore: the houses at Ecricok and Calabar are built in the same style; the inside walls are also painted in the same manner, with red, blue, and yellow circles. The question naturally suggests itself—Is the Cross or Calabar river a branch of the Quorra or Shary? From what has now been stated, and other circumstances, which I regret want of time will not allow me to enter into, as the vessel is on the point of sailing, both myself and colleague, Mr. Becroft, are of opinion that it is a branch of the Quorra, running out of this river between the confluence of the Shary and Ibú. We are also of opinion that a considerable trade is carried on between the natives higher up and the Ibú country; and it must be observed that the majority of the slaves sold by the Calabar chiefs are natives of Ibú and Nufi on the banks of the Quorra.

XVI.—*Is the Old Calabar a branch of the River Quorra?*—By Captain WILLIAM ALLEN, Royal Navy. Read June 26, 1837.

THE account of the recent ascent of the river Calabar by Messrs. Oldfield and Becroft, in the Quorra steamer, which was read at the last meeting of the Geographical Society, has revived a question of some importance in the hydrography of that portion of Africa connected with the Bights of Benin and Biafra, in which it will readily be believed I take a more than common share of interest—and which will, perhaps, be accepted as an excuse for the freedom of any remarks I may be obliged to make upon the account of this voyage. Mr. Oldfield is too well known as an African traveller, being one of the three officers only who have survived the expedition up the river Quorra in 1833-4, not to entitle his opinions to some consideration; but as I happen to differ from him on this subject, I feel bound to state my reasons frankly. My only object is to elicit truth; and the discussion